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

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The Previously Unknown Organ In Your Body That Stops Your Intestines From Falling

Post by  Obianuju Okafor January 5, 2017

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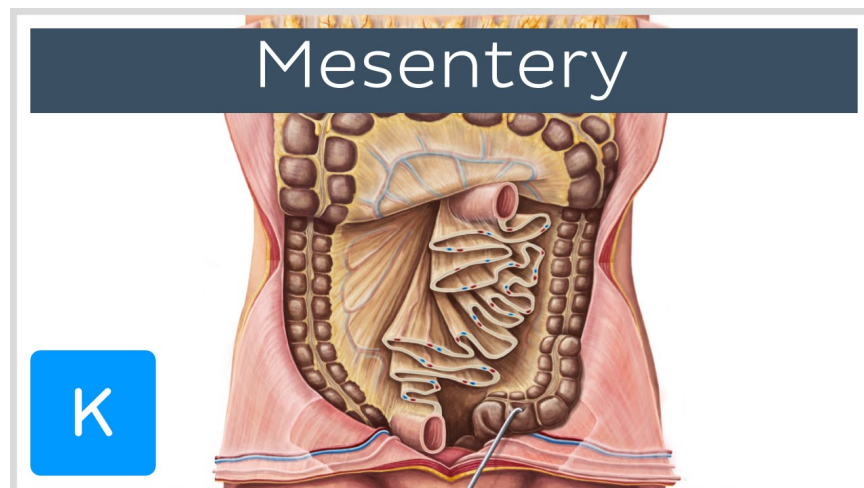
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A previously unknown organ in the body which carries out a pretty simplistic, if

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crucial role,
has been
discovered. The mesentery can be found behind
the skin of our bellies and the abdominal muscles
underneath.

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J. Calvin Coffey, a general and colorectal surgeon at the University of Limerick in Ireland puts the function of the mesentery in pretty interesting terms;

"It keeps the intestine in a particular shape,
...when you stand up, [your intestine]
doesn't fall into your pelvis."

That is a very simplistic role but one would be hard-pressed to argue that it is not vital. Without the mesentery which holds the intestines in place along our abdominal walls, our intestines could become tangled with blood vessels. Coffey actually said that children born without a mesentery can suffer "catastrophic events" with their intestines being suffocated.



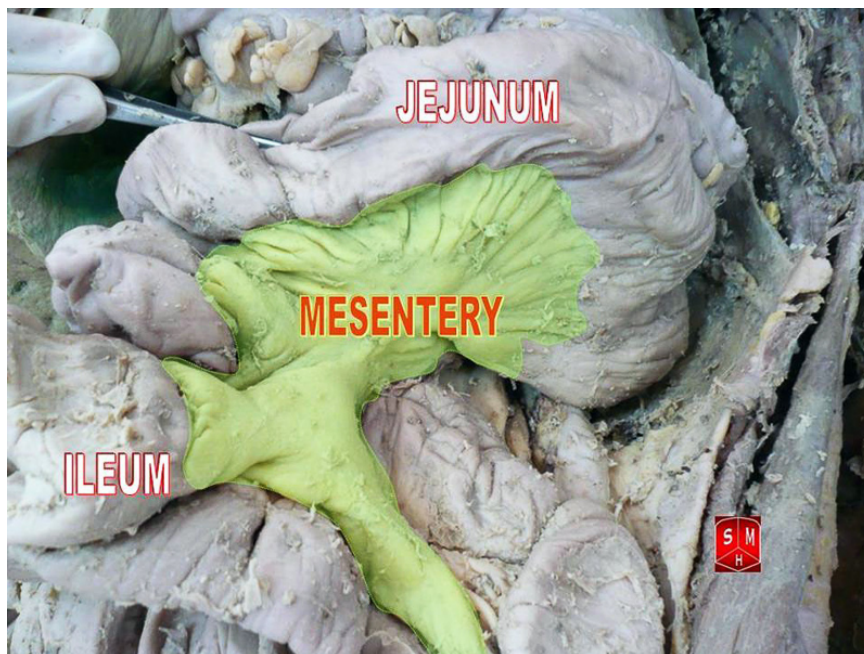
The discovery of this organ is actually no new feat of scientists, it has popped up in various textbooks through the years but as unconnected sections of tissue scattered throughout the intestines.

Its new continual structure was verified by Coffey and a team of colleagues in 2012 after they peeled away layers of the gut. In the four years since they have continued their work in research and evidence gathering alongside other scientists around the world to gather enough information to propose that the mesentery be considered an organ in its own right.

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A review on the mesentery was published by Coffey and colleague D. Peter O'Leary on January 3 in *Lancet Gastroenterology and Hepatology*, which saw the two asking that it be considered its own organ, rather than what it is classified as now; a type of crimped tissue, called peritoneum, which is dispersed throughout the abdominal cavity.

The Federative International Programme on Anatomical Terminologies (FIPAT) currently considers there to be 78 organs that make up 13 systems in the human body. Coffey is arguing for the mesentery to be included because it satisfies the organ criteria of having a clear function and a specific structure.



Coffey argues that the mesentery should be considered an organ because it holds up our intestines (a discrete role) and has a distinct structure which he explains thus;

"It has a beginning and an end, and in between it kind of fans out like a Chinese fan,"

He also believes that by defining it as an organ, it would become much easier to standardize information about it, which could be used for improving abdominal surgery techniques.

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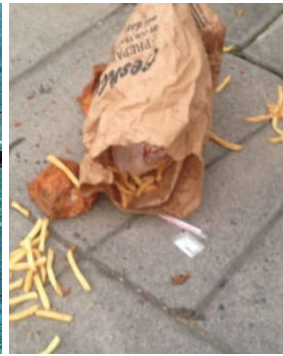
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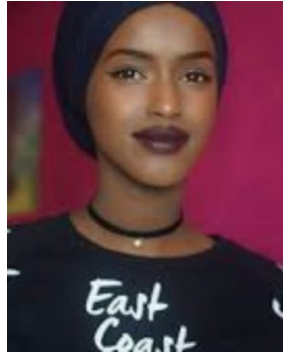

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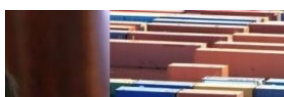

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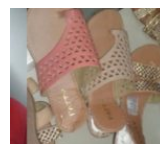
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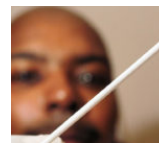
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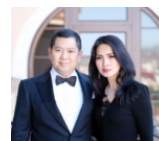
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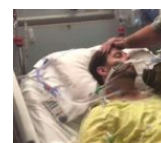
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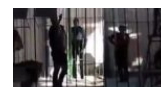
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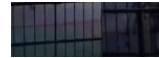
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